CHAPTER III

MACHINERY AND PROCEDURE
FOR THE PREPARATION OF ELECTORAL ROLLS
IN
UTTAR PRADESH
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ELECTORAL ROLLS IN UTTAR PRADESH.


The Law regarding the registration of electors was amended in certain important respects in 1958 and again in 1960. These amendments of the Representation of the People Act 1950 were designed to improve the procedure for the registration of electors and to facilitate the proper maintenance of electoral rolls. The Law regarding the preparation of electoral rolls for assembly and parliamentary constituencies, as contained

in the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, remained practically the same until December, 1966, when a few minor amendments were made. After the general election of 1962, the Commission directed that a summary revision of the electoral rolls would ordinarily be sufficient in the year 1963 and 1964. Intensive revision of the rolls on the basis of house to house canvassing by official enumerators was limited to a few constituencies or parts of constituencies when some special reasons existed.1

The Commission was convinced that it was a waste of effort to revise every year the electoral rolls of all the constituencies in the country. The device of summary revision made the task somewhat easier for the Electoral Registration Officer, since he had only to prepare a list of amendments to the various parts of the electoral roll on the basis of such information as might be readily available, publish the roll together with this list in draft and finalise it after going through the usual claims and objections procedure, but such a nominal revision was purposeless from the practical point of view.

The Commission felt that it would not be difficult to revise the electoral rolls of even a parliamentary constituency as and when a bye-election was to be held. With reasonable printing facilities and by employing a sufficient number of enumerators on the job, it should be quite practicable to revise intensively the electoral rolls for any constituency in about three months. 1

The Commission accordingly recommended that sub-section(2) of section 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 should be amended giving direction to the Commission to order revision of a particular electoral roll only when occasion demanded and not as a routine matter every year. This recommendation was accepted by Parliament and the sub-section was amended by the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 1966, to read:—

"(2). The said roll—

(a) shall, unless otherwise directed by the Election Commission for reasons to be recorded in writing, be revised in the prescribed manner by reference to the qualifying date—

(i) before each general election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of a State; and

(ii) before each bye-election to fill a casual vacancy in a seat allotted to the constituency; and

(b) shall be revised in any year in the prescribed manner by reference to the qualifying date if such revision has been directed by the Election Commission: Provided that if the electoral roll is not revised as aforesaid, the validity or continued operation of the said electoral roll shall not thereby be effected. 1

The scheme for the preparation of electoral rolls, as expounded in part III and IV of the Representation of People's Act 1950, was enacted in 1950. The above act enjoined that the electoral rolls were to be compiled separately for the Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies. 2 Now this meant that the compilation of electoral rolls which itself was a job of mammoth proportions was to be done twice over. Hence, to eliminate this unnecessary labour, a moments amendment was introduced in the Representation of People's Act, 1950, which enjoined that the electoral roll for an Assembly constituency shall be the basic roll. 3

3. Ibid.
The injunction continued that the electoral roll for a Parliamentary Constituency need not be prepared separately. The electoral rolls for the various Assembly constituencies which lie within the purview of the Parliamentary constituency shall be treated in the eyes of the Law as the electoral roll for that Parliament constituency.

The Chief Electoral Officer of a State played a vital role in the electoral machinery. If we refer only to the rules framed under the Act he had been accorded an oblique statutory recognition. By the time the first general elections were held in 1951-52, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer was discovered to have grown immensely in importance and effectiveness. Looking to the importance and duties of this officer, the act was amended. Following an amendment of the act this officer has now received direct statutory recognition. The Election Commission will appoint him after consulting the State Government. The amendment act states that the Chief Electoral Officer is to supervise the preparation and revision of electoral rolls within the State subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the Election Commission.

Every citizen who is not less than 21 years of age on the 1st day of January of the year in which the electoral roll for a constituency is prepared or revised and is "ordinary resident" in the constituency at the time of such preparation or revision is entitled to be registered in the roll.¹

The liberal definition of "ordinary residence" as originally given in the Act enabled any adult citizen to get himself registered in constituency in which he actually residing or in which he owned a dwelling house or in which he possessed a dwelling house. To avoid multiple registration of a voter the law was accordingly amended providing that mere ownership or possession of a dwelling house in a constituency would not be sufficient to constitute ordinary residence in that constituency.

By another amendment, the qualifying date with reference to which the electoral rolls were revised every year was changed from 1st March to 1st January. This expedited the revision of electoral rolls in many States and made it possible for the Electoral Registration Officer to complete the revision and reprinting of rolls well before the end of the calendar year.²

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The scope of the Law was enlarged empowering the Electoral Registration Officer of a constituency to delete entries relating to persons who were dead or had left the constituency during the currency of the roll. He could exercise this power either on application or on his own motion. It was felt that a proper use of this provision could go a long way in maintaining the rolls up to date during the period between one intensive revision and another. A new section 31 was added in 1958 and enlarged in scope in 1960, making it a punishable offence for any person to make a false statement or declaration in connection with the preparation, revision or correction of an electoral roll or in connection with the inclusion or exclusion of any entry in a roll. 1

The system of having a separate set of revising authorities for the disposal of claims for the inclusion of names in the electoral rolls and objections to such inclusion was found in practice to be cumbrous and not very satisfactory. It was felt that it would be better to place the responsibility of carefully revising the rolls on the electoral registration officers themselves. The reference to separate revising authorities in Section 28 was accordingly omitted by the Amendment.

Act of 1960 and the rules were amended enabling the Electoral registration officers to dispose of claims and objections. In some States, where subordinate revenue officials had been appointed as electoral registration officers, the Commission replaced them by Sub-Divisional Officers.

The amending Act of 1958 gave to the electoral registration officers power to delete or amend erroneous entries but it did not provide for any appeal from their orders under this provision. This defect was removed in 1960 providing for an appeal from any order of the electoral registration officer, whether it was for correcting, transposing or deleting an entry under Section 22 of the Representation of the Peoples Act or for including or refusing to include a name under Section 23.

**Special Provision.**

Certain categories of service personnel, however, have the privilege of declaring the places where they would be residing if they were not in service, and getting themselves registered as electors in the constituencies in which those places are located. The service qualification which confers this privilege is defined in the Law as -
(a) being a member of the armed forces of the Union; or

(b) being a member of a force to which the provisions of the Army Act, 1950, have been made applicable, whether with or without modifications; or

(c) being a member of an armed police force of a State who is serving outside the State; or

(d) being a person who is employed under the Govt. of India in a post outside India. The Law further provides that the wife of any of these persons who ordinarily resides with the husband will also be entitled to the same privilege as the husband.

The implementation of the special provision was not an easy task. It involved the active cooperation and assistance of a large number of record offices so far as defence service personnel were concerned and of our foreign establishments so far as external service personnel were concerned. In 1961, registration of these electors in a separate part of the electoral roll for each constituency had been centralised in the office of the Chief electoral officer of each State. But in 1966, it was decided to decentralise the work and get it done by the electoral registration officer.

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in the district election office. Although during the interval of five years, the service parts of the electoral rolls had naturally become out of date to an appreciable extent, it was felt that calling for fresh declarations from all the service personnel concerned and preparing the parts *de novo* on the basis of those declarations would involve a great deal of work, which the record offices in particular, were not willing to undertake. It was accordingly decided to call for revised or fresh declarations only from those concerned and to make the necessary amendments in the relevant parts of the electoral rolls. This procedure was not very satisfactory. It will certainly be necessary to prepare the service parts of all the electoral rolls afresh in a comprehensive manner as was done in 1961.1

**Holders of certain offices (special voters).**

The holders of the following offices (and their wives if they reside with them) are also entitled to be registered in the electoral rolls of the constituencies in which they would be residing but for their holding such offices:

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(1) The President of India.
(2) The Vice-President of India.
(3) Governors of States.
(4) Cabinet Ministers of the Union or of any State.
(5) The Deputy Chairman and members of the Planning Commission.
(6) Ministers of State of the Union or of any State.
(7) Deputy Ministers of the Union or of any State.
(8) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha or of any State Legislative Assembly.
(9) The Chairman of any State Legislative Council.
(10) Lieutenant Governors of Union territories.
(11) The Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha or of any Legislative Assembly.
(12) The Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha or of any State Legislative Council.
(13) Parliamentary Secretaries of the Union or of any State.

In their cases also, declarations in the prescribed form1 have to be made and sent to the registration officer of the constituency concerned.

Members of Parliament and State Legislatures.

As members of Parliament and State Legislatures are required to remain away from their constituencies

1. See Rule 7 and Form 1 of Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.
for a considerable part of the year in connection with their duties as such members, they may not be in a position to verify whether their names in the electoral rolls are continued from time to time, particularly when the rolls are revised. The election commission has, therefore, a system of special check in regard to their inclusion in the electoral rolls. Exhaustive lists of the names of all sitting members of Parliament and the State Legislatures are prepared in respect of every assembly constituency. The Chief Electoral Officer sends this list to the constituency concerned. This list is kept up-to-date and the Electoral Registration Officer kept informed from time to time of all changes therein. At the time of the publication of the draft electoral rolls the Electoral Registration Officer concerned has to certify to the Chief Electoral Officer that the name of every member of Parliament or State Legislature is included in the roll if he continues to be eligible for such inclusion.

There was no specific provision in the original act authorising the inclusion of the name of an eligible person in an electoral roll once the roll had been finally published. To this purpose, a provision was made in the

rules framed under the act legalising such inclusion.1 Legally this was an unsatisfactory position in as much as it was not impervious to doubts as to whether such a provision made in the rules was intra-vires of the act. This logic led to incorporation in the act itself of a specific provision intended to authorise such inclusion. The amended act empowered the Electoral Registration Officer of the constituency to make such inclusion save when the election is impending. To meet a contingency of the later type the Chief Electoral Officer of the State has been empowered to include any name in the electoral roll. A right of appeal has also been given to an unsuccessful applicant for the inclusion.2 Such an appeal is addressed to the Chief Electoral Officer where the order has been passed by the Electoral Registration Officer and to the Election Commission where the order has been passed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

According to the injunction of the unamended act the electoral roll for a Local Authorities Constituency of a Legislative Council was to be prepared with reference to a qualifying date which was the 1st April of the year. But from this provision a serious

anomaly occurred. The trouble was that the names of persons who had ceased to be members of Local Authorities after the first revision of the Electoral roll of such a constituency remained on the electoral roll and hence enjoyed suffrage at a bye-election of biennial, on the other hand persons who had become members of the Local Authorities after the last revision were denied suffrage at such elections. Later the act was purged of this anomaly by a provision which says that the electoral roll for Local Authorities constituency shall consist of the names of the members of the Local Authorities within the constituency and that the Electoral Registration Officer for the constituency shall always maintain the electoral roll up-to-date. Consequently the need for a routine annual revision of such an electoral roll has gone off the work.

The qualifying date for the Graduate's and Teacher's constituencies of the Legislative Council in which the Roll is to be prepared or revised has been altered from the 1st of April to the 15th January of the year.  

No person can exercise his vote in any election to the legislatures if he is not registered as a voter in the electoral roll prepared for that constituency. There is an electoral roll for every constituency prepared under the superintendence, direction and control of the Election Commission. Special provision was made for the preparation of the first electoral rolls in order to avoid delay which would have been caused if the preparation had to await the delimitation of constituencies. The draft rolls were prepared in relation to specified areas known as electoral units - tahsils in Uttar Pradesh but the final publication of the roll was to be constituency wise.

Qualification and Disqualification for Registration in Uttar Pradesh.

The grim realization that gargantuan labour was involved in preparing or revising separately the electoral rolls for Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies induced the commission to amend the R.P.A., 1950. Now in pursuance of the amendment, the

electoral roll for every Parliamentary constituency shall consist of the electoral rolls of all the Assembly constituencies that constitute the Parliamentary constituency.  

The qualifications which a person must possess in order to be registered as a voter in the electoral rolls of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly constituencies are as follows:  

Every person who on the qualifying date:

(a) is not less than 21 years of age, and

(b) is ordinarily resident in a constituency and not disqualified otherwise, is entitled to be registered in the electoral roll for their constituency. The qualifying date in relation to the preparation or revision of an electoral roll is the 1st day of March of the year in which the roll is prepared or revised.  

The Law disqualifies a person for enrolment as an elector if he:

(a) is not a citizen of India, or

(b) is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court, or

(c) is for the time being disqualified for voting under the provision of any Law relating to corrupt practices or other offences in connection with elections.

Electoral Registration Officer in Uttar Pradesh.

The Electoral Registration Officer, in the State of Uttar Pradesh, has been appointed by the Election Commission in consultation with the Government of Uttar Pradesh. Generally, these officers are in the Government or Local Authorities. Further the Law also provides for the appointment of Assistant Electoral Registration Officers by the Election Commission to help the heavily burdened Electoral Registration Officers in performance of their functions. These Assistant Electoral Registration Officers are to work directly under the Electoral Registration Officer and subject to the control of Electoral Registration Officer. Assistant Electoral Registration Officer is competent to perform all or any of the functions of the Electoral Registration Officer. Officers of the rank of Deputy Commissioners, Collectors, Deputy Collectors, Tahsildars were generally appointed as Electoral Registration Officers. Junior officers or those working under them were appointed to help and assist them as Electoral Registration Officers in Uttar Pradesh. During the first general elections of 1951-52, 1275 Electoral Registration Officers for the

2. Section 13C, R.P.A. Ibid.
Assembly constituencies and in the Second General Elections of 1957, 1125 Electoral Registration Officers were appointed throughout the whole of India. The strength of the Assistant Electoral Registration Officers in India was 1116 during the Second General Election of 1957. There were in all 952 electoral registration officers and 2,410 assistant electoral registration officers in 1967 as against 1017 electoral registration officers and 1958 assistant electoral registration officers in 1962.

The chief duty of the Electoral Registration officer and Assistant Electoral Registration Officer in Uttar Pradesh is to prepare or revise the electoral rolls for Legislative Assembly and Councils. Secondly, an elector may apply to the Electoral Registration Officer for a correction regarding the entry concerning himself in the electoral roll. The Electoral Registration Officer is empowered by law to make the necessary corrections.

2. Ibid.
when he is satisfied that every entry in question in fact relates to the applicant and is erroneous or defective. Thirdly, any person whose name is entered in one part of the electoral roll may apply for a transposing of the entry relating to himself to any other part of the same roll. Lastly, a person who is eligible for enrolment as a voter but whose name has not been included in the electoral roll of a constituency may apply to the Electoral Registration Officer for the inclusion of his name in the electoral roll. If however, such an application for the inclusion of a name is made after the issue of a notification calling upon the Assembly constituency to elect a member and before the completion of that election, it must be made to the Chief Electoral Officer instead of the Electoral Registration Officer. When an application for inclusion of a name in the electoral roll was made to the Electoral Registration Officer and has been rejected by him, an appeal may be filed against such order of rejection to the Chief Electoral Officer of the State. Similarly an appeal lies to the Election Commission against an order of rejection passed except in an appeal by the Chief Electoral Officer.

2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Ibid.
Electoral Rolls in Uttar Pradesh.

Following are the particulars of the electoral rolls:¹

(a) "the name of the elector;
(b) the name of his father or mother and in case of a married woman the name of her husband;
(c) his house number and address,
(d) his sex,
(e) his age, and
(f) whether he was a Muslim or a Christian or belongs to any scheduled caste."

It was not really necessary to include in the electoral roll any information regarding the religion or the caste of the voter because the elections were going to be held on the basis of joint electorate.² But some seats were reserved for Muslims, Christians and scheduled castes and the Returning Officer as the sole authority decides whether a candidate can contest a seat. So, in order to help the Returning Officer the authorities deemed it desirable that the electoral rolls should mention whether a voter on the roll was a Muslim, a Christian, or a person belonging to one of the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes.³ In accordance with this

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
decision the Uttar Pradesh Government was requested to maintain a column for this purpose in the electoral rolls. In May 1949, however, the Constituent Assembly reiterated and its original decision in favour of reservation of seats reaffirmed for Muslims and Christians.\(^1\) Concurrently, the Diwaker Committee commissioned by the Constituent Assembly recommended that no person should be forced to furnish data concerning his creed or caste in any public document.\(^2\) The deliberations, therefore, centred round these two views. Firstly, the data in the electoral rolls regarding the caste of a voter could not alone be accepted as an adequate and authentic evidence of the voters right to contest the elections for a reserved seat. Secondly, the proposal for reserving seats in the legislature for Muslims and Christians was not carried through. So the Uttar Pradesh Government was directed to delete this column from the electoral rolls. Practically all other States in India followed the decision and deleted the column but the Madras Government refused to agree to this decision.\(^3\) The reason adduced by the Madras Government that the inclusion of data regarding the religion and caste of a voter in electoral rolls would be very helpful

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2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
in identifying the voter at the time of poll. But since the argument did not go on all forms, the direction of Election Commission prevailed. And in compliance with this direction this column was ultimately deleted when the rolls were next revised.

**Enrolment of Displaced Persons in Uttar Pradesh.**

Following the partition of India vast multitudes of refugees migrated to India and in particular to Uttar Pradesh. Unflagging efforts are being made to rehabilitate this vast concourse of displaced persons, but mere economic rehabilitation divorced from political rehabilitation, so the first step towards such rehabilitation is obviously to register them as citizens of the country and then to extend the franchise to them by enrolling them as electors. According to the citizenship Act of 1955, citizenship was conferred on certain categories of persons who have migrated to India after the partition of the country in 1947. ¹

The prerequisite for being enrolled as voter was registration as a citizen of India. The authorities fixed 15th December, 1956, as the last date for registration. ²

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The Government duped authorities to register the displaced persons under the citizenship Act of 1955. A displaced person was required to apply formally for registration as an Indian citizen to the competent registration authority. The competence of the displaced persons for participating in the second general elections made them scuttle for enrolment as voters. They were advised by the Election Commission to apply for the Indian citizenship in time so that they might be enrolled as Indian citizens before 15th December, 1956. This advice was wedded to an assurance that the Election Commission itself would engineer the enrolment of such registered persons as voters, as were eligible for franchise. Such of the newly registered Indian citizens as were not less than 21 years of age on the First day of March, 1956, and were ordinarily resident in a constituency on that date, were entitled to be enrolled as voters in that constituency provided they were not otherwise disqualified. In order to expedite the enrolment of displaced persons in the electoral rolls, a provision was made in the law whereby every displaced person on being registered as an Indian citizen, would automatically be considered for enrolment as an elector.
by the Election Registration Officer concerned. To accommodate the names of immigrants registered as Indians a supplementary electoral rolls was prepared. Thus was handled the gigantic and perplexing problem of affording political rehabilitation to those millions of helpless people who were uprooted from their motherland, and flung a sub-continent across homeless, helpless and heartless.

Provision of Electoral Rolls in Uttar Pradesh.

The criteria for revision of electoral rolls from time to time in Uttar Pradesh were based on the Representation of People Act, 1950, the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 1966, which have already been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter.

Along with these criteria, the Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh put forward and experimented with a suggestion for the revision of the rolls. Hitherto, before the elections, the Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh Mr. Mitthan Lal in a Statement suggested a new method for the revision of electoral rolls which is as follows:

"The U.P. Government proposes to extend all over the State what is called the "U.P. Method" of electoral rolls revision.

The method which was devised by the State Chief Electoral Officer Mr. Mitthan Lal, seeks to employ a regular staff of moderate strength for the enumeration work instead of huge army of temporary staff and multigraphing of revised electoral rolls of duplicators, in each district election office.

This method was first tried in eight districts of the State and later it was approved by the State Government for extension in other districts also.

The election department had spent in the last two general elections approximately Rs. 12 lakhs on staff each time and a huge amount on the printing of electoral rolls. The new method of revising electoral rolls will bring about a saving of nearly Rs. 25 lakhs to the State exchequer."

With the imminence of the second general elections of 1957, the Election Commission focussed its attention on the question of the number of electoral rolls to be printed. According to the Act, two copies of the rolls to be supplied free of cost to every political bodies every year. In many areas the Local bodies found it
very convenient to conduct their elections with the help of the prepared rolls by the Election Department. So demands from such bodies for copies of rolls were not infrequent. Besides, the possibility of by-election was kept in view. Therefore, the decision was given to order 200 copies of the electoral rolls to be printed.

Statistical Data from Uttar Pradesh.

After the completion of the electoral rolls in this State the total number of electors enrolled during the year 1956, was 3,490,1603 against 4,30 seats.2 The number of electors in the whole country (including Jammu and Kashmir, Andaman & Minicoy) touched to the height of 193,646,069.3 46.52\% of the total population in Uttar Pradesh was thus entered in the electoral rolls and as regards the entry of the total population electoral roll of the country was about 50.4\%. The percentage of the adult population in Uttar Pradesh is estimated at about 56.86%6 and country

2. Ibid. Vol. II, Govt. publication.
4. Ibid. Vol. II, Govt. publication.
wide about 51%. The total number of electors for the first general elections of 1951-52, in Uttar Pradesh was 3,177,309, and in the country was 17,21,21,948. This represented about 37.8% of the adult population in Uttar Pradesh and 37.1% in the country. Whereas for the second general elections in 1957, about 98.8% of the adult population was enrolled as voters.

The total number of electors on the rolls at the time of the general elections for all the constituencies in India (including Jammu & Kashmir) was 213,216,585. This was 49.91% of the total population of those constituencies as ascertained at the census of 1961.

The total number of electors on the rolls at the time of general elections was 250,312,239 as against 218,216,585 on the rolls in 1962, representing a 14.71% increase.

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3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
The Table-1 below gives for Uttar Pradesh the total population according to the 1961 and 1971 census and the number of electors in 1962, 1967, and 1971.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF ELECTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73,746,401</td>
<td>88,299,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36,661,848</td>
<td>42,131,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45,827,648</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrolment of Women Voters, Members of Legislatures and Cost of Electoral Rolls in Uttar Pradesh.

The proverbial conservative diffidence of Indian women played a prominent part while the electoral rolls for the first general elections were in blue prints. Some customs of the society prevented voters from giving their proper names to the Registration Authorities in this State. They usually gave themselves out as some male members relation. Entry in the electoral rolls were not by their own names but by the


** India Goes to the Polls, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.
description of the relationship they bore to some male relation. After due considerations of the conservative customs and prejudices, the Election Commission instructed for the substitute of the proper names of these female voters in the electoral rolls. Hence, the Electoral Registration Officer had no other option but chuck out the names of these women voters. The entries in respect of as many as 2.8 million women voters had to be deleted from the draft electoral rolls in refusing to open their proper names. The deletion of entries in respect of women voters arose high especially in Uttar Pradesh.

Inspite of the best efforts made during the first general elections in the year 1951-52, to cope with the problem of women voters, success could not be achieved due to lack of experience and time, the problem remained unsolved. However, further more efforts towards this direction were made after the end of the first general elections. Electoral Registration Officers were again instructed by the high command just to persuade these women voters to disclose their proper names and then enroll them as electors. This problem, no doubt, was tackled very sincerely but the authorities came to

the conclusion that success could not be achieved unless the cooperation and help was not sought from the political parties and the local women organisations with a view to break down the prejudice in this regard on the part of women concerned. The political parties and various women organisations helped a lot to bring women voters near the polls for the exercise of their franchise with the result that when their other sisters saw exercising their franchise, they were immensely affected and that resulted in the success to break down the old prejudices and local customs. Now many of them came out with their proper names even during the first revision of the electoral rolls undertaken after the first general elections. The State of Uttar Pradesh did not report any difficulty in the enumeration of women voters afterwards. About 92,141,597 women voters got registered in the electoral rolls of the country i.e., about 94% of the adult women voters in the country got registered in the electoral rolls.¹

The following Table-2 gives a clear picture of electors including men and women at the general elections of 1962 and 1967.

**TABLE - 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electors</th>
<th>1962 (millions)</th>
<th>1967 (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>113.9</td>
<td>129.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>102.4</td>
<td>119.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two general elections of 1951-52 and 1957 incurred a huge amount of money on the preparation and revision of electoral rolls which amounted approximately to Rs. 5,99,55,719.

The sympathetic and liberal attitude of the Election Commission towards the voters was always marked by the millions of this country. The only goal which commissions wants to achieve is that every adult of the country should exercise the right of franchise.

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* India Goes to the Polls - Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Table-13.

Cooperation of Political Parties and Village Organisations in Uttar Pradesh.

Impartially speaking the recognised political parties in the State could not fully extend the hands of cooperation in the task of revision of the electoral rolls. Political parties put forward certain reasons just to protect their skin but lame excuses for the national cause are hardly justified. However, with the intention to receive cooperation from the political parties in all spheres specially in the sphere of electoral roll, a new rule, namely rule 11(c), was added to the Representation of People (Preparation of Electoral Rolls) Rules, 1956. Accordingly, each recognised political party in the State is to be supplied with two complete copies of the draft electoral rolls of the entire State. After having the copies of the electoral rolls, the political parties with their workers could have made exhaustive checking i.e., from door to door and to communicate the omissions and mistakes of the electoral roll to the Electoral Registration Officer of that constituency, but argued by way of explanation that the 1956 revision of the electoral having taken place shortly before the general elections and the 1957 revision shortly thereafter, the political parties were too
preoccupied to extend effective cooperation in this regard during these two revisions. However, the experiences of electoral from 1958-59 onwards, showed that it is worthwhile giving free copies of Electoral rolls to the recognised political parties. Although this favour done to the recognised parties, was vehemently criticised by the un-recognised political parties and also independent candidates. They felt that the recognised political parties used the electoral rolls for the elections rather than the corrections of the electorals and on the other hand they had to spend a lot of money over the preparation of electoral rolls for them.

The successful conduct of a general election in a vast country like India depends to a large extent on the cooperation of village organisations (i.e., the Panchayat, Gaon Sabha, Union Board, Community Development Unit and the like as may be available in each particular area), which would be requested to check the roll and to return it promptly with a list of necessary amendments, say within a week or so. These lists could then be treated as informal suggestions for amendments and after necessary scrutiny by the normal revising agencies.
These lists could be incorporated in the draft electoral rolls before formal publication. Villagers were sounded by the commission in a few areas, in some States and their reactions to the suggestion were encouraging. The Commission is already corresponding with the State Government for exploring the possibilities of this method of introducing an independent and additional check by the electorate themselves. In the proportion to the enthusiasm aroused among the villages in this regard, the annual revision of the rolls in the rural areas will become more effective and satisfactory. Since the adoption of this method, there has been very few occasions for complaints from the electorate on the score of the rolls.

So long as the political parties are apathetic, the social organisations insouciant and the voters themselves somnolent it is sheer folly to dream of accurate rolls. The active cooperation of these political parties, social organisations, and voters can only help in the accurate compilation of electoral rolls.